



South Dakota Department of the Military  
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



## WE DIDN'T FORGET—WE HIRED A VET

Dave Schaefer, Hamlin County Veterans Service Officer, has developed a new plan to recognize veterans, conduct outreach, and thank employers for hiring veterans.

The program, "We Didn't Forget.....We Hired a Vet," kicked off last week in Hamlin County. Schaefer made the first presentation to Kones Korner.

Schaefer's plan is to recognize one business a month that hires veterans. Each business will be featured in the newspaper and receives a decal for their window. The stickers were donated by Full Throttle Graphics in Clark.

Schaefer said the project is a win/win. He gets to thank the employers for hiring veterans and while there he gets to visit with the veterans about benefits and services they might be eligible for.

Hats off to Dave for a great idea and a great opportunity to say "thank you."



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## SD GUARD KICKS OFF SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

South Dakota National Guard kicked off the "It's On Us" campaign to raise awareness about sexual assault and educate soldiers and airmen on how to prevent sexual violence.

The campaign is a part of the national effort which recognizes April as Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month.

"It's On Us' is a national campaign, derived from the White House Task Force on Sexual Violence, which we have tailored to reflect the values of the South Dakota National Guard," said Patricia Fordyce, SDNG sexual assault response coordinator. "It takes its name from the notion of communal responsibility for all cases of sexual assault and aims to create a safer community and environment for all soldiers, airmen and civilians in the SDNG."

The campaign's goal is to show a visible commitment SDNG members are making to one another, drive participation in sexual assault education and prevention, and embed a culture of respect within its ranks.

"This is an opportunity for all members of the SDNG to become involved in sexual assault prevention on an individual level," said Air Force Col. Russ Limke, SDNG J1 director of personnel. "The campaign is a way to bring the conversation about sexual assault back to what each of us can do to protect our friends, colleagues and peers."

Limke says the focus is on creating a culture of respect and responsibility - where there is regard for others and intervention in dangerous situations.

"We want to create a culture where support for those who are victims of sexual assault is the norm," he said. "We are calling all members of the Guard community to actively create a positive environment that prevents sexual violence by looking out for one another, intervening when necessary and spreading awareness."

For this year's Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month, SDNG Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, signed a proclamation expressing sustained leadership focus and commitment to eliminating sexual assault from within the Guard ranks and to provide their support for the victims.



## SD GUARD KICKS OFF SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS CAMPAIGN (CONTINUED)

"Our profession is built on the bedrock of trust, but sexual assault and sexual harassment betray that trust," said Reisch. "They have a corrosive effect on our unit readiness, team cohesion, good order and discipline. It is up to every one of us, soldier, airman, general officer to new enlistee, to eliminate this problem from our ranks. These acts violate everything our organization stands for. They are contrary to our values and they must not be tolerated."

National studies show one in five women will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime, as well as one in six men. Every two minutes, someone in America is sexually assaulted.

A central theme for the campaign is for SDNG members to start a conversation among leaders, peers, and subordinates and with family and friends - to better understand one another's experiences and to develop better solutions to this problem.

Reisch says part of the conversation starts with correcting problematic behavior - without hesitation - just as it occurs, and includes: to sternly correct people on the spot who tell inappropriate jokes or make sexual advances; to report inappropriate behavior to the chain of command, to refuse to accept complacency relating to respecting all human beings; and to immediately report violations and potential violations of these standards.

"Leaders at every level are responsible for establishing a command climate and culture of mutual respect, trust, and safety," said Reisch. "Together, we will set and enforce the highest standards of discipline within our organization and create a culture free from sexual assault."

## SDDVA MINI CONFERENCES

SDDVA will be hosting Mini Conferences in Rapid City, Pierre, and Brookings, May 10-12. The conferences will be held from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at the following locations:

May 10—SDDVA Mini Conference—Rapid City—TREA—1981 Centre Street

May 11—SDDVA Mini Conference Pierre—American Legion Post 8—520 S. Pierre Street

May 12—SDDVA Mini Conference—Brookings—City/County Building—520 3rd Street—Suite 300

Presentations will address pension eligibility and fully developed claims, pension forms/documentation, VetraSpec, Digits2Digits, and live feed use and access to MAPD, SHARE, VBMS and Virtual VA. Staff from the SD Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation will also be part of the program and will present information on their telecommunication program and tools available for veterans.

These mini conferences are a great opportunity to get training from our claims office team and the field officers.





## APRIL IS MONTH OF MILITARY CHILD

April marks the nation's "Month of the Military Child," a time to honor military youth in communities who have been impacted by deployments, as well as the unique opportunities and challenges that all military children face.

The SDNG, SDDOM and SDDVA invites everyone to join in and be part of "Purple Up! For Military Kids Day," being held Friday, April 15.

South Dakota schools, communities, businesses and organizations are being encouraged to wear purple on that date as a tangible way to show their support and thank all military children for their strength and sacrifices.

"This is a perfect time to celebrate military children and to recognize their character, strength and resilience," said Taryn Broomfield, SDNG Child & Youth Program lead coordinator. "Our military youth are impacted daily, whether their service member is home, deployed, at drill, or away attending training or school."

There are more than 7,100 military children in South Dakota with parents or guardians who serve in the National Guard, Reserves and active duty. Of these children and youth, over 3,900 are affiliated with the SDNG.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard demonstrated his support of military kids by signing a proclamation announcing April 2016 as the Month of the Military Child.

Established by Casper Weinberger in 1986, the Month of the Military Child recognizes the important role military children play in our communities. We pause each year to honor the millions of military children for their contributions to their families.

"Military kids are an integral part of our families and communities, and they serve too," said Broomfield. "Please celebrate the military children in your life and thank them for all that they do."



# "In Their Shoes" What is it like?

April is the Month of the Military Child  
Child Abuse Prevention Month and  
Sexual Assault Awareness Month

**Wednesday, 06 April 2016, Ellsworth AFB**

**FAMILY-FRIENDLY PARADE**  
(Starts at Youth Center Parking Lot)

When: 1600

Special Guest Speakers:  
2016 Military Youth of the Year &  
Camp Rapid Youth Council Members

**Service of Reflection & Remembrance  
for Survivors of Sexual Assault**

Where: Freedom Chapel

When: 1730

Join us for refreshments and activities  
following the parade and service.

Children under 9 must be accompanied by an adult.  
For more information call 385-2277 or 385-5233.



## SDDVA PARTICIPATES IN ASPIRE CONFERENCE

This week, educators from universities in North Dakota and South Dakota attended the annual ASPIRE Co-State Conference at the Mitchell Ramada Inn to discuss educational opportunities and student engagement initiatives.

ASPIRE Inc. is the professional organization for TRiO professionals in the region that includes South Dakota, North Dakota, Colorado, Utah, Montana, Wyoming and Utah. TRiO's mission is to increase the educational and success opportunities for low-income and first-generation college students through advocacy, professional development and legislative awareness.

TRiO programs coordinated by Aspire professionals in South Dakota include upward bound, educational talent search and student support services. Through these programs, more than 2,600 students are served each year in South Dakota.

SDDVA's Education Program Manager Shane Olivier spoke to the group about GI Bill benefits.

Davison County VSO Jessica Davidson and SDDVA's Steve Oliva were on hand to respond to questions on benefits.

DWU's TRiO office provides students with some of the following services: one-to-one tutoring, collegiate and professional mentoring, grad. school preparation, mock interviews with professionals in their field of interest and more.





# Upcoming Events

April 9—50th Anniversary Recognition Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Celebration—American Legion Post 22 - 818 E. St. Patrick Street - Rapid City—:00 pm (MT)  
April 15-17—DAV Convention—Rapid City—Adoba  
Apr. 18-19—SDCMF Symposium—Black Hills State University Center—Rapid City  
Apr. 20—Veterans Council Meeting—DAV Headquarters—Sioux Falls  
Apr. 23—Boots to Business Reboot Program—SD Technology Business Center—Sioux Falls (8:30—4:00)  
May 10—SDDVA Mini Conference—Rapid City—TREA—1981 Centre Street  
May 11—SDDVA Mini Conference Pierre—American Legion Post 8—520 S. Pierre Street  
May 12—SDDVA Mini Conference—Brookings—City/County Building—520 3rd Street—Suite 300  
May 13—Improving Combat Veteran Care Conference—University Center—Sioux Falls—8:00 am (CT)  
May 14—South Dakota Vietnam Veterans of America Meeting/Election—Post 8 American Legion—Pierre (election at 11:00 am (CT) and meeting at 1:00 pm (CT))  
May 14—2nd Annual PVA Poker Run and Concert—Sanford Pentagon—Sioux Falls  
Jun. 9-12—VFW State Convention—The Lodge at Deadwood  
Jun. 16-19—American Legion State Convention—Ramkota—Watertown  
Jul. 1—Buffalo Chip Annual Flag Raising Ceremony—West Gate Entrance off Ft. Meade Way—6:00 pm (MT)  
Jul. 11—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)  
Jul. 23-24—Sioux Falls Air Show  
Aug. 22-25—SDDVA Annual Benefits School—Pierre Ramkota  
Oct. 3—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)

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